

13019

**DECISION**

**THE COMPTROLLER GENERAL  
OF THE UNITED STATES**  
WASHINGTON, D. C. 20548

FILE: B-195978

DATE: March 4, 1980

MATTER OF: Raj Ramaiya

[Claim for Mileage]

*Organization's  
ACTION Concerned  
Quintessence of  
Office  
PLG 04029*

**DIGEST:** Employee submitted a claim to be reimbursed for the amount of miles he drove while performing his local assigned duties. This claim, while signed by employee's supervisor, was on the wrong form and therefore rejected. Employee resubmitted the claim on the correct form which was not signed by his supervisor but on which the supervisor's signature was typewritten. Since employee intended to submit a claim to be reimbursed for the amount of miles he drove and since the supervisor, when he signed the incorrect form, intended the employee to be reimbursed for such mileage, neither the use of the wrong form nor the fact that the supervisor did not sign the correct form should serve to defeat the employee's claim for mileage reimbursement.

The issue is whether a mileage reimbursement voucher may be certified for payment when the required signature of the employee's supervisor is typewritten rather than handwritten. For the following reasons our Office would not object to payment of the voucher.

The question is presented for an advance decision by letter of August 31, 1979, from Mr. Joe W. Oliver, Jr., Authorized Certifying Officer, Region VII, ACTION agency.

The facts as presented indicate that during the months of December 1978 and January 1979, Mr. Raj Ramaiya, a Vista Volunteer, used his own automobile in order to carry out his assigned duties. We assume that Mr. Ramaiya received authorization from the ACTION Regional Office to use his own automobile.

In order to be reimbursed for on-the-job mileage Mr. Ramaiya was required to submit a completed ACTION Form V-37, Statement of Mileage. ACTION Handbook,

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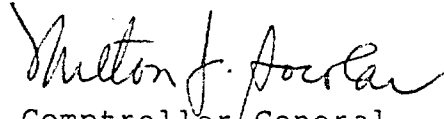
Number 4301.1, Chapter 7, para. 57e (July 1, 1975). This report is required to be certified by the Sponsoring Organization (supervisor). ACTION, Region VII Directive, Number 4301.11 (August 24, 1978). Certification in this instance consists of the supervisor's signature at the bottom of form V-37.

Upon completion of his assigned duties, Mr. Ramaiya submitted a form V-37a for reimbursement of his on-the-job mileage. This form was for reporting mileage in Government automobiles, however, it was signed by his supervisor. Mr. Ramaiya, was not reimbursed on the grounds that he had requested mileage reimbursement on the wrong form. Subsequently, he resubmitted a request for reimbursement on the correct form. This form was not signed by Mr. Ramaiya's supervisor. In place of the supervisor's signature was the typewritten phrase "s/t Gary De Moss." This form was returned to the Missouri State Director as incomplete with the request that the supervisor's signature be obtained. Instead of returning the document to the supervisor the Missouri State Director contacted the Deputy Regional Director who indicated that it was all right to pay the claim since the signature on the incorrect form was valid. The authorized certifying officer has determined that the voucher may not be certified for payment on the grounds that without the supervisor's handwritten signature the voucher is not legal.

In the present situation it is undisputed that Mr. Ramaiya intended to claim mileage rather than just report the amount of miles he drove in a Government automobile while performing his assigned duties. Moreover, there is no question that when Mr. Ramaiya's supervisor signed the wrong form he intended that Mr. Ramaiya be reimbursed for the amount of miles he drove. In light of the above, we believe that neither the use of the wrong form nor the fact that the supervisor did not sign the correct form should serve to defeat Mr. Ramaiya's claim for reimbursement. Thus, he may be reimbursed for the mileage claimed on the voucher, if it is otherwise correct.

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Accordingly, the voucher is returned in consonance with the above.

A handwritten signature in cursive script, reading "Milton J. Fowler".

For The Comptroller General  
of the United States